



Southeast Fishery Bulletin

National Marine Fisheries Service, Southeast Regional Office, 263 13th Avenue South, St. Petersburg, FL 33701

FOR INFORMATION CONTACT:

Mary Janine Vara, or mary.vara@noaa.gov
727/824-5305, FAX 727/824-5308
<http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov>

June 4, 2015
FB15-037

NOAA Fisheries Seeks Public Comment on a Proposed Rule for the Snapper-Grouper Fishery of the South Atlantic Region *Comment Period Ends July 6, 2015*

NOAA Fisheries is seeking public comment on the proposed rule for Regulatory Amendment 22 to the Fishery Management Plan for the Snapper-Grouper Fishery of the South Atlantic Region (Regulatory Amendment 22). The proposed rule published on **June 4, 2015 (80 FR 31880)**, with a comment period ending on **July 6, 2015**.

The proposed rule would adjust the annual catch limits (ACL) of gag and wreckfish based on the outcome of population assessments.

Gag

The commercial and recreational annual catch limits for gag would initially decrease from 2014 levels, but would gradually increase and exceed 2014 levels by 2018. The total annual catch limit for gag is allocated between the commercial and recreation sectors. Commercial and recreational allocations will continue to be 51% and 49%, respectively. The commercial annual catch limit is reduced to the directed commercial quota by 27,218 pounds gutted weight to account for discard mortality of gag that would result from targeting other shallow water groupers after harvest of gag is closed. The new values in pounds gutted weight are:

Year	Total Gag ACL	Commercial ACL (51% of Total ACL)	Directed Commercial Quota	Recreational ACL (49% of Total ACL)
Current (2014)	694,000	353,940	326,722	340,060
2015	632,700	322,677	295,459	310,023
2016	637,450	325,100	297,882	312,351
2017	677,350	345,449	318,231	331,902
2018	710,600	362,406	335,188	348,194
2019	734,350	374,519	347,301	359,832

Wreckfish

The commercial and recreational annual catch limits for wreckfish would be higher than 2014 levels. The total annual catch limit for wreckfish is divided among the commercial and recreation sector. Commercial and recreational allocations will continue to be 95% and 5%, respectively. The new values in pounds whole weight are:

Year	Total Wreckfish ACL	Commercial ACL (95% of Total ACL)	Recreational ACL (5% of Total ACL)
Current (2014)	235,000	223,250	11,750
2015	433,000	411,350	21,650
2016	423,700	402,515	21,185
2017	414,200	393,490	20,710
2018	406,300	385,985	20,315
2019	396,800	376,960	19,840
2020	389,100	369,645	19,455

Request for Comments

Comments on the proposed rule must be received no later than **July 6, 2015**, to be considered by NOAA Fisheries. See the Addresses section for information on where and how to submit comments below.

Addresses

Electronic or hardcopies of the proposed rule may be obtained from:

- The NOAA Fisheries Web site: http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/sustainable_fisheries/s_atl/sg/2015/reg_am22/index.html.
- The South Atlantic Fishery Management Council's Web site at <http://www.safmc.net>.

You may submit comments by the following methods:

- Electronic Submission: Submit all electronic public comments via the Federal e-Rulemaking Portal. Go to www.regulations.gov/#!docketDetail;D=NOAA-

[NMFS-2015-0034](#), click the “Comment Now!” icon, complete the required fields, and enter or attach your comments.

- Mail: Mary Janine Vara
NOAA Fisheries
Southeast Regional Office
Sustainable Fisheries Division
263 13th Avenue South
St. Petersburg, Florida 33701

More Information

For more information on the proposed rule for Regulatory Amendment 22, please follow this link to the Frequently Asked Questions:

http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/sustainable_fisheries/s_atl/sg/2015/reg_am22/index.html

All comments received are a part of the public record and will generally be posted for public viewing on www.regulations.gov without change. All personal identifying information (e.g., name, address, etc.), confidential business information, or otherwise sensitive information submitted voluntarily by the sender will be publicly accessible. NOAA Fisheries will accept anonymous comments (enter "N/A" in the required fields if you wish to remain anonymous).